

Energy Efficient Ideas for the Season

In the kitchen:

Don't peek! Every time the oven door is opened, the temperature inside can be reduced by as much as 25 degrees, forcing it to use more energy to get back to the proper temperature. Use the oven window instead.

Use a slow-cooker. Winter is the season for slow-simmered soups, so there's no better time to bring out the slow cooker. As an added bonus, the slow-cooker is one of the most energy-efficient devices in the kitchen.



At home:

Give the furnace or heat pump a break. If your holiday plans include a houseful of people for a party, think about turning the thermostat down a bit. The heat of the oven from cooking and all those guests can keep your house at a comfortable temperature and give your heating bill a break.

Heading out of town? Remember to turn off lights and unplug electronics before leaving. Use a timer for the security lights so they are only on when you need them to be. Remember to turn down the thermostat or use the “vacation” setting if it has one.

When you're the guest:

Be the perfect holiday guest. Keep showers short and watch out for other water waste. Turn off lights when you are not using them. Help with the dishes but don't run the dishwasher before it's full to be the most energy efficient.

Don't forget the recycling:

Recycle that tree. If you have a live tree, remember to check your local area for locations to take your undecorated Christmas tree to be recycled.

Put those cards to good use. St. Jude's Ranch is a great place to send your greeting cards to be recycled. Check out their website at [Recycled Card Program](#) for more details.

Time off from work:

If applicable, turn off your office or task lights before you leave. Shutdown your computer or put it into hibernate or sleep mode.